

State of Hawaii
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Office of Community Services

Addendum No. 3

October 23, 2006

To

Request for Proposals

RFP No. OCS LBR 903-02
Employment Core Services for Immigrants

RFP No. OCS LBR 903-03
Employment Core Services for Refugees

September 13, 2006

October 23, 2006

ADDENDUM NO. 3

To

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**RFP NO. OCS LBR 903-02
EMPLOYMENT CORE SERVICES FOR IMMIGRANTS**

**RFP NO. OCS LBR 903-03
EMPLOYMENT CORE SERVICES FOR REFUGEES**

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Office of Community Services is issuing this addendum to RFP No. OCS LBR 903-02, Employment Core Services for Immigrants, and RFP No. OCS LBR 903-03, Employment Core Services for Refugees, for the purposes of:

- ☒ Responding to questions that arose at the orientation meeting of September 27, 2006, and written questions subsequently submitted in accordance with Section 1-V, of the RFP.
- ☐ Amending the RFP.
- ☐ Final Revised Proposals

The proposal submittal deadline:

- ☐ is amended to <new date>.
- ☒ is not amended.
- ☐ for Final Revised Proposals is <date>.

Attached is (are):

- ☒ A summary of the questions raised and responses for purposes of clarification of the RFP requirements.
- ☐ Amendments to the RFP.

☐ Details of the request for final revised proposals.

If you have any questions, contact:

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Responses to Question Raised by Applicants
For

RFP No. OCS LBR 903-02
Employment Core Services for Immigrants

RFP No. OCS LBR 903-03
Employment Core Services for Refugees

OCS thanks Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) for taking the time to review the RFPs for OCS LBR 903-02 (Immigrant RFP) and OCS LBR 903-03 (Refugee RFP) and to ask clarifying questions. Consistent with our efforts to work with our service providers, we are grateful for the opportunity to provide guidance.

In CCH's October 3, 2006 e-mail regarding the Immigrant RFP, CCH essentially asks four (4) questions and makes one (1) statement regarding the "Highly Challenged" classification. These questions and statement will be answered and responded to in the same order as contained in CCH's October 3, 2006 e-mail.

Furthermore, OCS also thanks Hawaii Economic Opportunity Council (HCEOC) for reviewing the Immigrant RFP. Our response to HCEOC's question concerning Milestone 2 of the Immigrant RFP will follow our responses to CCH's Immigrant RFP questions.

In CCH's two e-mails dated October 18, 2006 regarding the Refugee RFP, CCH asks two (2) questions. Our answers to the questions concerning the Refugee RFP will follow our answers to the questions regarding the Immigrant RFP.

IMMIGRANT RFP

1. Eligibility

After setting forth the question's context, CCH asks:

"How can these newly-arrived immigrants who are living with their sponsors who have submitted Affidavit of Support [sic] saying that their household income is at least 125% of the Federal poverty guidelines qualify for our Employment Core Services?"

If they include the income of their sponsors in computing their household income, these newly-arrived low-income immigrants will not qualify for our services."

Our answer:

The RFP designates the target population as “unemployed and underemployed low-income immigrants and their families who are at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.” Section 2, p. 2-2. **Even assuming the sponsor’s household income is included in the calculation of an immigrant’s income**, 150% is greater than 125%. Therefore, a sponsor’s household may exceed 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for Hawaii and the immigrant may still qualify for Employment Core Services, if the sponsor’s household income does not exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for Hawaii. For example, for a household size of four, 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines is **\$28,750**. Under the 150% ceiling in the RFP, a household size of four, can make up to **\$34,500** and still qualify for the Employment Core Services in the scenario you pose in your question.

However, we **do not** read the RFP to necessarily mandate that the sponsor’s household income be included in the calculation of the immigrant’s income for eligibility purposes. Reaching “unemployed and underemployed low-income immigrants and their families who are at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines” is the objective of the RFP. Given this objective, we read “low-income immigrants and their families” in the RFP to mean **the prospective immigrant participant, his or her spouse, and any minor dependents. In other words, the “income” that must be at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for Hawaii is the combined income of the prospective immigrant participant, that of his or her spouse, and any minor dependents.**

2. Current Practice

CCH states that it has been “taking the newly arrived immigrants as a separate household from their sponsor although they are in the same house.” CCH then asks, “Can we continue to do this?”

Our answer:

Your determinations regarding eligibility must comport with our answer to question 1 above.

3. “Curriculum-based training”

CCH states: “Regarding the on-on-one and curriculum-based training. All our clients receive curriculum-based training. It doesn’t matter if there is just one or 10 clients in a class. The “kind” of training has nothing to do with the number of clients. At the RFP orientation last week it was said that the number didn’t matter but will it when we prepare our proposal?”

Our answer:

When preparing your proposal with respect to training, we believe the following are particularly relevant factors: (1) what is your staff's capacity to hold training sessions (either one-on-one or group curriculum-based sessions); and (2) in your experience, what are the approximate numbers of participants you anticipate to be enrolled in one-on-one and group curriculum-based sessions, respectively.

As a point of clarification, "curriculum-based training" as used in the RFP does **not** mean that your one-on-one sessions are not based on a curriculum. Rather, "curriculum-based training" as used in the RFP contemplates classroom training or the "delivery of services to more than one person at a time." RFP, Section 2, p. 2-6. Specifically, "curriculum-based training" in the RFP involves (1) at least **20** hours of employment/job development services and (2) program syllabus (indicating class times and course description), and attendance sheets or certificates of completion. RFP, Section 2, p. 2-6.

At the orientation, OCS stated that, in light of the practical realities in administering your program, we will not penalize you for holding a class where only one person shows up. The focus is on the type of training (i.e., 20 hours and program syllabus).

4. ESL Classes

CCH asks, "Can we bill for Milestone 2 even if the client does not choose to attend an ESL class?"

Our answer:

We would hope that you would actively encourage your clients to take formal ESL classes. An important component to higher quality, higher paying jobs is fluency in English. As such, the best practice would be to have a client complete an ESL class. However, you cannot force someone to take a formal ESL class, per se.

Accordingly, a client's refusal to take in formal ESL classes will not necessarily prevent a service provider from charging for Milestone 2.

With respect to Milestone 2 "one-on-one sessions," there is no ESL requirement. Therefore, failure to take ESL classes would not prevent a service provider from billing for Milestone 2 "one-on-one sessions" at a rate of \$560 per client and \$700 per "highly challenged" client.

With respect to Milestone 2 "curriculum-based training," OCS will insist that some component of teaching English as a second language be incorporated into other topics covered in the training (i.e., "acculturating clients to Hawaii workplace norms, effective time management, financial literacy and budgeting, and self-motivation techniques to

improve sense of self-worth.”) For example, in teaching clients to acculturate to workplace norms in Hawaii, a service provider may acquaint several English language terms commonly used in the workplace.

The rate for “curriculum-based training” under the RFP is \$800 per client and \$1000 per “highly challenged” client. The differential between the “one-on-one sessions” and “curriculum-based training” is not merely for conveying the **same** concepts for an additional 10 hours. **The differential goes to incorporating the teaching of concepts and skills that will lead to higher quality, higher paying jobs.** In our view, English is one of those skills.

5. “Highly challenged”

CCH makes the following statement: “Three categories for “Highly Challenged” will be beyond the expertise of most employment service providers. Our counseling is not therapeutic, it is supportive, and requiring medical certification for clients’ health condition will not be easy. **Those criteria could leave the Highly Challenged clients without any service providers.**”

Our response:

OCS takes issue with your statement on two points.

First, by acknowledging documented health or mental issues as factors in considering whether a person is “highly challenged” under the RFP, OCS does not require you to provide therapeutic services. OCS merely requires that health or mental issues be documented. While we encourage your efforts to be supportive to your clients, some issues need verification. Otherwise, there would be no way to safeguard the integrity of the criteria established in the RFP. We ask that you exercise your best efforts in obtaining documentation, and we will work with you regarding issues regarding whether the documentation you gather in a particular case is sufficient. However, documentation is required.

Second, your statement that “those criteria could leave the Highly Challenged clients without any service providers” is wrong. The “Highly Challenged” criteria in the RFP is designed to discourage “creaming” and encourage service providers to help harder to serve immigrants by paying them an increased rate. **Service providers remain free to service any clients at the regular client rate.** Service providers who can supply documentation to support their claim that a particular client is “Highly Challenged” under the RFP can qualify for an increased rate. This differential is an incentive to help those most in need. We sincerely hope that the need to obtain verifiable documentation will not cause any service provider to turn down needy clients because they cannot receive a higher rate.

6. Homeless

CCH asks: “Would you also consider “homeless” those who move from one relatives’ [sic] home to another, or live in cars, shacks, and tarps (like those on the Big Island).”

Our answer:

We believe the text of the RFP provides clear guidance on this point. “Currently homeless” is defined as “at the time of intake, [participant] not residing in a house or an apartment.” RFP, Section 2, p. 2-13. As long as one is not living in a house or an apartment at the time of intake, one qualifies as “currently homeless” for purposes of the RFP.

7. Milestone 2

Regarding the one-on-one services under Milestone 2 of the Immigrants RFP, HCEOC asks, “Would giving a participant materials to study at home, take the test at home be an acceptable means to fulfill this requirement?”

Our answer:

No. One-on-one services requires a minimum of 10 hours of face-to-face training time.

REFUGEE RFP

1. Effect of amount of clients on payment

CCH asks if there are no refugee arrivals in 2007-2009, will the service provider be paid?

Our answer:

The Refugee RFP, unlike the Immigrants RFP, is **not** performance based. It is **not** performance based because we recognize that service providers cannot control the flow of refugees into the United States, much less those who come to Hawaii. Accordingly, provided Federal funding is not cut, OCS will reimburse the service provider for all expenses incurred in implementing and running the program, up to the full contract amount if the lack of clients are in no way the fault of the service provider. In other words, the service provider will be judged on the quality of the program design, the staff implementing the program, and the actions taken to implement such program; providers will not be penalized because no refugees were designated to come to Hawaii by the Federal Government.

2. Qualification of Applicants

CCH asks if the following language on page 2-2 restricts applicants to VOLAGs (Volunteer agencies) only:

“The applicant shall have a minimum of one-year experience in Hawaii directly providing refugee resettlement services.”

Our answer:

No. In this context, “refugee resettlement services” refers generally to the types of service activities described in Section III.A. of the Refugee RFP, p. 2-4 to 2-7. In other words, applicants should have a minimum of one-year experience in Hawaii providing social services to refugees.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify issues and provide guidance. We hope this helps all service providers in preparing high-caliber applications